

2015-16 Community Report for Gorsebrook Junior School

Provincial Assessments		
	School (%)	Board (%)
	2015-16	2015-16
<u>Literacy Assessments</u>		
Grade 8 Provincial		
Reading	85%	76%
Writing - Ideas	100%	91%
Writing - Organization	89%	80%
Writing - Language Use	96%	82%
Writing - Conventions	78%	70%
<u>Math Assessments</u>		
Grade 8 Provincial		
Mathematics	87%	63%

Throughout the 2015-2016 school year, Gorsebrook was in Year Three of the Student Success Plan (SSP) process. Our focus again this year was implementing strategies developed to work towards meeting our school's Literacy (to improve students' reading comprehension with a focus on critical thinking skills) and Mathematics (to improve students' mathematical problem-solving) goals.

As indicated in the above table, the majority of our students continue to meet and exceed the RWM8 standards of achievement. Our students achieved well above the school board average in all areas of Literacy and Mathematics. We will continue to support and challenge all students in their learning to ensure the best education possible.

During the year, our teachers met on a weekly basis within their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to collaborate on effective teaching, learning and assessment strategies to facilitate student success in meeting our goals. Both Literacy and Mathematics teachers collected and analyzed provincial, school board, and school-based data as measures of these strategies, as well as to identify the individual needs of learners. Furthermore, the results of these assessments and surveys served as a springboard for discussions around areas for improvement, specific lessons, events, and opportunities to further improve student understanding and performance. PLCs continued to prove invaluable to both teachers and students, as they provided teachers with time to share and generate ideas, while building on their knowledge of how to better meet the needs of our students.

In addition to PLC meetings, our teachers engaged in a variety of board and school-based professional development opportunities. From our school board, Math teachers received training on the new math curriculum, additional resources, and sample lessons. In addition, they reviewed past results and areas for improvement on the Nova Scotia Grade 8 Math Assessment, and discussed strategies for informing and preparing students. Our Literacy teachers attended various PD sessions, which enhanced their teaching practices around experiential and enquiry-based learning, as well as reading strategies around comprehension in French Language Arts. School-based PD days were designed around further developing a shared understanding of our literacy and numeracy goals, and to support all teachers in the implementation of our strategies for improvement. These opportunities for training and collaboration allowed teachers to further develop and differentiate their teaching practices for the benefit of all learners.

This past year, at all levels (provincial, board and school) there was an emphasis on technology integration, placing importance on innovation and collaboration. Select Grade 9 teachers were enrolled in the Information Economy Initiative Extended (IEI-E) cohort for training in Google Apps for Education (GAPE) and literacy online. As a staff, we shared and explored applications that would improve communication, actively engage students in their learning, and facilitate assessment, thereby helping students to meet our goals with success. Staff has embraced the slogan, "TOGETHER we know much. TOGETHER we do much."

Our SSP goals support the enrichment opportunities we offer our students at Gorsebrook. Students are able to apply their improved critical thinking and problem solving skills in our many class-based and extracurricular enrichment activities, such as the Pascal & Gauss Math Contests, Debate Club and Destination Imagination.

Upon reflection of Year Three of our SSP process, we are very pleased with how our teachers took advantage of and benefited from professional development, and opportunities for collaboration. Furthermore, staff has continued to draw from a variety of data sources to inform their teaching and assessment practices, as well as their understanding of our school culture. Finally, teachers reviewed and revised Year Three strategies based on current areas for improvement to support continued success in Year Four.